

Inner North East London Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee

c/o O&S Team
Hackney Council
Area K, 2nd Floor
Hackney Service Centre
1 Hillman St
London, E8 1DY

Reply to: jarlath.oconnell@hackney.gov.uk

11 June 2015

Dr Sir Sam Everington, Chair of Tower Hamlets CCG
Dr Zuhair Zarifa, Chair of Newham CCG

by email

Dear Drs Everington and Zarifa

CCG's response to CQC Inspection reports on Barts Health NHST Trust

I am writing to express the Committee's concern at your response to the serious situation at Barts Health which has failed a series of CQC Inspections.

At our meeting on 27 May, when we were discussing the improvement plans for the Trust with its senior management and the CQC, a number of Members expressed serious concern at the tone of the letters which you each issued on 22 May, following the publication of the CQC's damning reports.

Despite the Trust receiving the lowest possible rating of 'Inadequate' and despite similar individual ratings for Whipps Cross, Newham, the Royal London and the Margaret Centre and the whole Trust being placed in 'Special Measures', your letters both express "disappointment" at the ratings but do not seem to express sufficient concern about the gravity of the issues raised within the reports, where it is clear that the key acute hospitals in your areas have failed. It is also of concern that the responses in some parts contain almost identical wording, giving the impression that each CCG is not acting independently of the other in its response.

The Committee has been looking at the worsening situation at the Trust over the past few years and despite the promises and the, no doubt, good intentions of all the senior managers involved, what we've witnessed is a continuing deterioration in the quality of services, a worsening of staff morale, a worrying rise in bullying and some administrative disasters such as the new electronic patient record system. We have responded in some detail to the Trust's draft Quality Account where we have raised a wide range of matters.

We are worried that you have not accepted your responsibility to drive change and improvement despite being the key funders and therefore having more leverage here than anyone else. We note Newham CCG welcomes the level of support and expertise that the special measures improvement regime is bringing. This support would not be there without the CQC inspection having taken place. Whether a CQC inspection takes place can be dependent upon them being alerted to problems by local commissioners. It is incumbent upon commissioners to monitor the quality of services and to be critical when standards are not met.

We are sympathetic to the Trust staff that are working to improve the situation and are pleased to hear about some areas of good practice but we re-iterate that part of what we expect now is both an acknowledgement of the severity of the situation and a more proactive response from the local CCGs.

Yours sincerely



Cllr Ann Munn

Chair

Inner North East London Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee

cc Members of INEL JHOSC
Steve Gilvin, Chief Officer, Newham CCG
Jane Milligan, Chief Officer, Tower Hamlets CCG
Paul Haigh, Chief Officer, City and Hackney CCG
Alwen Williams, Chief Executive Officer, Barts Health NHS Trust
Dr Steve Ryan, Chief Medical Officer, Barts Health NHS Trust
Hayley Marle, Hospital Inspections Directorate, CQC